

Ecotourism development in Java, Indonesia: Case studies from around the world

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Abstract The illegal wildlife trade, combined with deforestation and anthropogenic land use, are the main causes for the endangerment of Java's primates. While there are a variety of organisations working towards the preservation of these species, the high revenues needed to rehabilitate animals, conduct long-term research, or manage protected areas is often a drawback. Furthermore, organisations that focus on less charismatic species, such as the small-bodied primates of Java, often have difficulty receiving funding. The implementation of an ecotourism package would allow these organisations be to self-sustaining, and would have a positive impact on the wildlife, local communities, and visitors involved. Here we present six case studies focusing on different criteria for ecotourism. The term "ecotourism" is often utilised inappropriately, particularly when tourism management fails to consider the welfare of wildlife, viability of the environment, or livelihoods of local communities. More often, the desire to raise revenue under the guise of "conservation" overcomes concerns for animal welfare or the preservation of the landscape. We will use these case studies to build a criteria assessment, which will allow for the evaluation and assessment of ecotourism feasibility at five existing rescue centres and national parks in Java. An ecotourism package developed between these partnering organisations will then strive to meet ideal standards of ecotourism.



Figure 1. Vietnamese Tonkin snub-nosed monkeys (*Rhinopithecus avunculus*)⁶

Impacts to Wildlife

Indonesia & Malaysia⁴

- Orangutan rehabilitation centres on Borneo and Sumatra allow tourists in order to raise revenue for welfare and conservation efforts
- Tourists have direct contact with apes, which compromises their release potential
- Recommendations: Complete ban of this practice; development of tours with broader themes that incorporate wild viewing of orangutans

Vietnam²

- Tourism development on Cat Ba Island and Cuc Phuong National Park rapid and lacking in management
- Lack of environmental education for tourists, damage to primates' habitat, and poaching has put langur conservation at risk
- Recommendations: Increased park entry fees; a focus on environmental education; amplified law enforcement

Community Development

Canada^{1,2}

- History of colonialism and land-rights issues between aboriginal people and the government
- Early tourism ventures were developed without input from aboriginal communities
- Co-management regimes allow for greater empowerment of the populations affected by cultural tourism
- Creation of "Tourism Guidelines" which regulate interference of whale-watching tourism on Inuvialuit hunting activities

Uganda³

- National parks legally bound to share 20% of entry fees with neighbouring populations
- Revenue-sharing schemes in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park focused on development for local administration (i.e. building council halls), fostering distrust within the community
- Recommendations: Development of institutions that directly involve local people in decision-making to ensure that revenue is appropriately distributed



Figure 2. A boy from the Batwa population, which was displaced by Bwindi park gazettement.⁷



Figure 3. Peneda-Geres National Park, Portugal.⁸

Environmental Considerations

Australia⁵

- Development of Silky Oaks Lodge governed by an Integrated Environmental Management System, which dictated that the lodge have zero negative impact on the environment
- On-site sewage-treatment plant which purifies and recycles sewage water, shower water, and water from kitchen drains and sinks
- Plant well maintained by sanitation engineers and consultants

Portugal²

- Peneda-Geres National Park visited by 2.5 million tourists every year; high level of endangered flora and fauna, including habituated wild horses
- Sensitive regions of the park visited by unsustainable numbers of tourists in search of rare species due to bureaucratic inefficiencies and lack of a well-formulated environmental strategy
- Recommendations: A zoning system that protects delicate ecosystems, regulates tourism areas, and sets aside land for local communities

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